

S. F. Ehrlichman
Ehrlichman

Dear Mr. President:

For the past two weeks it has become increasingly evident that, regardless of the actual facts, I have been a target of public attack. The nature of my position on your staff has always demanded that my conduct be both apparently and actually beyond reproach. I have always felt that the appearance of honesty and integrity is every bit as important to such a position as the fact of one's honesty and integrity.

Unfortunately, such appearances are not always governed by facts. Realistically, they can be affected by rumor, unfounded charges or implications and whatever else the media carries. For instance, this week totally unfounded stories appeared in the Los Angeles Times claiming I had asked our embassy in Lebanon to help the Vesco group in a banking deal. I not only did not do so but, in actual fact, I caused the State Department to cable the embassy that no one at the White House had any inter-

est in the Vesco dealings. Since I have already reported to you many of the facts in the Gray case, I need only say that at no time did I directly or indirectly suggest that Mr. Gray should do other than keep the Hunt documents, although there have been reports to the contrary. Equally without merit are the source stories about some alleged involvement in the Watergate matter.

As I analyze my situation, I have to conclude that my present usefulness to you and ability to discharge my duties have been impaired by these attacks, perhaps beyond repair.

It is not fair to you and my staff colleagues for me to try to do my job under these circumstances. Too much of my time and attention is and will be consumed in concern for and straightening out such allegations. At my request, I am going to have separate interviews this week with the district attorney and the Senate committee council. Thus, I am looking forward to an early review of the facts and evidence with the appropriate authorities, and I should spend the time necessary in relation thereto.

One of the toughest problems we have in this life is in seeing the difference between the apparent and the real, and in basing our actions only on that which is real. We all must do that more than we do. I have confidence in the ultimate prevalence of truth; I intend to do what I can to speed truth's discovery.

Therefore, Mr. President, I submit to you my resignation. There are on the domestic council staff so many good people of ability that I am confident a transition of my responsibilities can be affected without loss of progress. I will do all I can to assist in accomplishing the transition.

Yours sincerely,

John D. Ehrlichman